

Education Interrupted - How Teacher Shortages and other Interruptions Affect Our School

Mehkai Royer
Reflector Staff

Teacher shortages can have a significant impact on students and the entire learning environment at school. When there are not enough teachers available, students may experience changes in their schedules, larger class capacity, substitute teachers (when they are available), or disruptions to their regular instruction.

At Charlotte Amalie High School, challenges involving school conditions have also affected teachers and students. In August 2024, concerns about mold and extreme heat in some classes forced faculty members and students to leave certain learning spaces, such as the modulars, according to reporting by the St. Thomas Source. These conditions disrupted instruction and raised concerns about the environments in which teachers are expected to work and students are expected to learn.



Students, Faculty, & Staff protest the conditions of the Classrooms in August 2024

While facility issues are not the only cause of teacher shortages, working conditions can play an important role in whether teachers choose to remain at a school (or in the teaching profession). Teachers need safe and functional classrooms to effectively educate their students. When problems involving mold, heat, air conditioning, or other issues related to facilities continue, teaching and learning can become more intricate.

Teacher shortages can directly affect students, both immediately and over the long term. When a teacher is unavailable, classes may be covered by substitutes, volunteers, or (for CAHS) students might go into the sprung. These disruptions can interrupt the persistence of instruction and hinder the development of stable, trusting relationships with educators. Over time, such instability may affect students’ academic progress, reduce engagement, and limit opportunities for personalized support, all of which are essential for sustained educational success.

Teacher shortages can also place additional pressure on the teachers who remain. Educators may have to take on extra responsibilities, cover additional classes, or work with larger numbers of students; and over time, these problems can affect both teachers and the quality of education students receive.

The issue is more than simply filling vacant positions. Schools must also consider how to attract and retain qualified teachers. Providing safe working conditions, supporting educators, and addressing student behavioral concerns are all important parts of creating an environment in which teachers want to remain.

The challenges at CAHS demonstrate how problems within a school can affect everyone. When teachers are unavailable or working conditions become difficult, students are often directly affected.

While CAHS continues working to address staffing concerns, one question remains: What can be done to ensure that schools have enough qualified teachers to provide students with the consistent education they deserve?

Adjusting to the New School Year

C. Mackenzie Roberts
Reflector Staff

As a new school year begins, students are adjusting to new classes, teachers, schedules, and responsibilities. While the first few weeks can be exciting, they can also be challenging as students get used to the changes that come with a new school year.

For some students, returning to school means getting back into a regular routine after summer break. Waking up earlier, completing assignments, studying for tests, and balancing school with activities can take some time to get used to.

Students are also adapting to new teachers and different expectations. Each class can have its own rules, assignments, and workload, requiring students to learn how to manage their time effectively.

However, the new school year also gives students an opportunity to meet new people, make new friends, and set goals for themselves. Some students are focusing on improving their grades, becoming more involved in school activities, or simply having a better school year than the previous one.

Although adjusting to a new school year can take time, students are gradually finding ways to manage their responsibilities and settle into their routines. As the weeks continue, the unfamiliar parts of the school year are becoming more familiar, helping students feel more comfortable and prepared for what lies ahead.

How Today’s Music Influences Teens

La’Nya James
Reflector Staff

For many teenagers, music is more than just entertainment. It can influence emotions, personal style, interests, and relationships. Teenagers listen to different genres of music, including hip- hop, R&B, reggae, pop, and gospel. Young people can discover new artists and songs almost every day, with streaming platforms and social media making music easier to access. Music has become an important part of teenage culture and the way many young people express themselves.

One of the biggest ways music influences teenagers are through emotions. Many people choose songs based on how they feel. Upbeat music may help someone feel excited, confident, or motivated, while slower music may help someone relax or deal with difficult emotions.

Sometimes, teenagers listen to music because the lyrics describe feelings or experiences they cannot easily explain. Music can provide comfort and help people feel less alone.

Music can also influence fashion and self-expression. Teenagers may develop their personal style based on artists they admire. Clothing, hairstyles, dances, and other trends can be influenced by music and popular artists. Social media has made these trends spread even faster, allowing young people from different places to participate in the same trends.

Music also connects teenagers to different cultures and brings people together. Listening to music from different countries and communities can introduce young people to new sounds, traditions, and experiences. Teenagers can also form friendships and start conversations because they enjoy the same artists or genres.

Overall, music continues to have a strong influence on teenagers. It can affect emotions, fashion, culture, and relationships while giving young people a way to express themselves. As music trends continue to change, music will likely remain an important part of teenage life.

CALENDAR & NOTICES

The SAT

- Test Date: September 12, 2026
- Test Date: October 3, 2026

Registration Deadline: September 18, 2026

Visit <https://www.collegeboard.org/> or touch bases with your counselor for more information and/or to register for your first/next/final SAT.

THOUGHTS & OPINION

The Caust of Moving On

Malayah Gumbs-Henry
Reflector Staff

Israel is currently committing (what for all intents and purposes and what is viewed by a growing number of countries internationally as) a genocide against the Palestinian people, yet they seem to face no repercussions for it. **Why is that?** Mass murder, displacement of families, destruction of homes and critical infrastructure, the attacking of aid groups, the assault of journalists, all of this is currently taking place in Gaza. Many individuals have described Israel’s actions as a genocide, but some seem to dispute that characterization. The Holocaust should never be forgotten, and the suffering of the Jewish people should be remembered and respected, but at the same time that history should not be used to dismiss, deflect, or silence criticism of the Israeli government. One’s suffering should never require us to overlook the suffering of another. We are often reminded of the injustices and persecution Jewish people experienced during World War II during arguments against the genocide they are committing. Yet, Native Americans and African Americans are often told to “move on” from the injustices committed against their communities. Historical suffering should not be treated selectively no matter what the situation. We should be able to remember the Holocaust, condemn antisemitism, and demand accountability for the war crimes Israel is committing against the Palestinian people. Remembering history should mean learning from it. Hearing about past monstrosities should not be the only suffering that matters when it happens to certain people. Human life, dignity, and freedom deserve protection regardless of a person’s ethnicity, religion, or nationality.

ENTERTAINMENT

Experience Points

Reflecting on: Until Then

Jaden Ghamandi
Reflector Staff

In a world navigating the aftermath of a meteorological anomaly called the Ruling, “Until Then” doesn’t focus on the extraordinary; but the mundane.

Enter Mark Borja, teenage slacker extraordinaire, as he navigates high-school life in a recovering 2014 Philippines in the wake of “the Ruling,” along with his best friends, Cathy and Ridel, and new girl on the block, Nicole. Navigate relationships, your grades, and hobbies as you slowly uncover the darker mystery hidden beneath the multiple disappearances happening around your school.

At its core, “Until Then” is a game about the present and the future. The game does an excellent job of showcasing the messy side of coming of age in its choice of music, dialogue, and art. The main dilemma stems from Mark’s aspiration as a pianist, following in the steps on his mother, who’d left the hobby behind for whatever reason.

When the new girl on the block, Nicole Laher, arrives it shows how people can shape the person we eventually become. Nicole’s arrival doesn’t immediately feel like the beginning of some grand adventure. Instead, it feels surprisingly ordinary. She’s simply a new student, and Mark is simply a teenager trying to get through another day of school.

The game’s greatest strength is its characters. Mark, Cathy, Ridel, and Nicole all feel like actual teenagers rather than archetypes designed to move the plot forward. Their conversations can be awkward, funny, frustrating, and occasionally uncomfortable in a way that feels genuine. Even



UNTIL THEN (CONT'D)

the smaller interactions help sell the idea that these characters have lives outside of the story’s central mystery.

“Until Then” slowly introduces something much darker underneath its otherwise mundane setting. The disappearances surrounding Mark’s school initially feel like a strange side story, but gradually become impossible to ignore. The contrast between the ordinary problems of teenage life and the increasingly unsettling events happening around the characters creates much of the game’s tension. One moment you’re worrying about an exam or arguing with a friend; the next, you’re questioning just how much you actually understand about the world around you.

Visually, the game complements this perfectly. Its pixel-art presentation gives the Philippines of 2014 an incredible amount of personality, with locations feeling lived-in and accurate to real-life. Combined with its soundtrack, “Until Then” manages to create a strangely nostalgic atmosphere for a period that many players may have never even experienced themselves.



Iota Phi Lambda Sorority, Inc.



Impact



Ideas



Lead



Evelyn D. Wilkey



Essay Contest



THEME:
CREATING OUR FUTURE: THE ROLE OF
ENTREPRENEURSHIP
IN EMPOWERING THE NEXT GENERATION



Deadline - December 30, 2026
Middle School - High School Students

REFLECTOR STAFF

Would you like to meet someone from the Reflector Staff? Of course you do, or else you wouldn't be reading this right now!

Faculty Editor of the CAHS Reflector

Iambakisye Richardson (Mr. Iam) is a 2003 Graduate of the Charlotte Amalie High School. Ironically while a student at his alma mater, he was not enrolled in Yearbook of Journalism, he was however a member of the spotlight team and in his senior year served as a radio host on a self-funded morning radio show on WVJZ 105.3 JAMZ. With a Bachelor of Science degree in Videogame Art and Design he has parlayed those skills to various graphic design projects both at the Charlotte Amalie High School, in the Virgin Islands, and even nationally and internationally. He has served as the faulty editor / instructor of the Reflector since 2021-2022 school year and prior served as a visual, graphic, and layout artist for the school newspaper. His interests include videogames, song, poetry, story, and scriptwriting, debate, and law. He also serves as the faculty coach for the CAHS Moot Court Team.

Semester 1 - 2026-2027 Reflector Staff

Meet – Adrianna Csanyi. In the future, Adrianna plans to become an ultrasound technician, although she is also open to exploring other career possibilities. She wants to continue developing her interests and talents before deciding on a specific career path. Readers can expect coverage from her on video games, entertainment, and music, with the possibility of covering books and movies as well. She hopes her stories will give readers something interesting to learn, discuss, or enjoy.

She maintains strong academic performance and currently ranks #35 in her class. As a Reflector staffer, Adrianna is developing her skills in interviewing, writing, photography, and graphic design. Through journalism, she hopes to strengthen her communication and storytelling skills while creating stories that inform and engage readers.

Meet – Andrea Daniel. She is a 16 years old senior, preparing to end her years at Charlotte Amalie High School. She enjoys swimming, reading, scuba diving, and playing the flute. You can see her during pep rallies performing with our school’s Marching Hawks. Aside from the band, she has a strong passion to become a Marine Biologist after graduation. She believes she will be a great asset to the Reflector because of her appreciation for media and photography.

Meet – Kaytara Daniel a 16-year-old senior at Charlotte Amalie High School. Throughout her time at CAHS, she has participated in Concert Choir and the CAHS Marching Hawks Auxiliary, where she currently serves as Vice President of Hawks Choir and Captain of Auxiliary. Outside of school, Kaytara enjoys crocheting, singing, modeling, dancing,

reading, photography, and other creative activities. As a Reflector staffer, Kaytara is especially interested in covering entertainment, dancing and singing, books, and movies. Her experience in performing arts and school activities allows her to connect with others and approach stories from a musical and creative perspective. Through The Reflector, she hopes to strengthen her writing and journalism skills while exploring her passion for the entertainment industry.

Meet – Khamani Francis Wyllis a student at Charlotte Amalie High School and a member of the Class of 2027. As a member of the Reflector, he focuses on stories involving video games, sports, and music. Khamani brings his interests and knowledge into his reporting to provide readers with engaging and informative stories. Outside of journalism, he plays saxophone with the Marching Hawks, where he continues to develop his musical skills. After graduating from high school, Khamani plans to attend Universal Technical Institute (UTI) to pursue his passion for automobiles and become an automotive mechanic. Through the Reflector, he hopes to explore topics that interest him.

Meet – Jaden Ghamandi. Senior at Charlotte Amalie High School. Specifically, he currently holds the 19th rank in the graduating class of 2027. His interests include video games, movies, reading, stories, psychology, philology, and law. Creative fields, such as video games, have always resonated deeply with him, due their ability to cover a wide spectrum of multi-faceted and creative themes, such as existentialism, depression, coming of age, etc. It has inspired him to try and pick up writing himself, as well as pick an English related major in college, which is Philology. As a fun fact, despite being from the States side, he has lived in the Virgin Islands longer than he has on the mainland, though he still regularly visits during breaks. You should expect news coverage on related topics on legal troubles and politics.

Meet – Malayah Gumbs-Henry. Senior at Charlotte Amalie High School. Throughout her time at CAHS, she has been on High Honors for each year and is currently a member of the CAHS Girl Scout organization and book club. She enjoys spending her free time browsing the internet, listening to music, doodling, and collecting trinkets. Surprisingly, she fears most reptiles except for bearded dragons and if she could own one, she would. She likes most animals, but her favorites by far are monkeys, toucans, and turtles. When she goes to college, she aims to major in computer science and minor in animation. Three areas of news that you can expect coverage from her are in politics, human interest, and art.

Meet – Jazmyn I. Gumbs also known as Jazzy, Jazz, or Tiny, is a 16-year-old senior at CAHS who was born in St. Thomas. Creative, hardworking, and passionate about art, Jazmyn enjoys painting, drawing, baking, and listening to music. Her creativity inspires her future goal of owning a business, possibly an art studio, bakery, or a combination of both. As a Reflector staff member, Jazmyn plans to cover student life, school events, and art and entertainment. She hopes to use her creativity to bring a fresh perspective to stories while exploring photography, visual design, and other areas of journalism. Through her work on the Reflector, Jazmyn aims to strengthen her communication and writing skills, connect with the school community, and gain valuable experience that supports her future goals.

Meet – La’Nya James a new member of the Reflector staff who enjoys expressing herself through music, poetry, and photography. She is especially interested in covering student life, school events, community stories, and topics that affect young people. Through her writing, La’Nya hopes to give students a voice while keeping readers informed about important events happening around them and around the world. Her creativity and problem-solving skills allow her to bring fresh ideas and different perspectives to the staff. Outside of journalism, she enjoys singing, dancing, learning about history, listening to music, and trying new things. In the future, La’Nya plans to pursue a career in geriatrics, where she hopes to care for and help the elderly.

Meet – Carly Jean Baptiste. A student and news reporter for The Reflector. She enjoys learning new things, meeting people, and sharing interesting stories with others. She is especially interested in covering entertainment, music, movies, and stories about young people in the community. Her joys include watching movies and listening to music, especially worship songs, because music helps her relax and express herself. As a reporter, Carly hopes to improve her writing and communication skills while informing and entertaining readers. This hopefully will lead to meeting and interviewing new people, learning about their experiences, and sharing their stories in a respectful and meaningful way.

Meet – Roshard Lewis. Reporter for the Reflector is interested in covering topics related to the wrecker business, trucks, automotive events, and the latest news in the community. He enjoys learning about vehicles and sharing information with others through his writing. Roshard also has an interest in creative writing and plans to bring his own perspective to the stories he covers..

Meet – Nyeed Liburd. 12th-grade student at Charlotte Amalie High School and a new member of the Reflector staff. He brings his interests in football, music, and gaming

into his work as a student reporter. As a football player and defensive captain, Liburd plans to focus on sports coverage, especially school football, athletes, and upcoming games. He also hopes to highlight student life and activities happening around CAHS.

Outside of reporting, Liburd enjoys freestyling and rapping, gaming, and playing football. He has earned High Honors and was named Defensive Player of the Year for football. With the upcoming football season approaching, Liburd looks forward to covering the action both on and off the field while giving readers an inside look at student athletics.

Meet – Mackenzie Roberts a student at Charlotte Amalie High School and a new member of the Reflector staff. She enjoys dancing, singing, making playlists, video editing, graphic design, learning languages, solving puzzles, playing games, traveling, and thrifting. Her creative interests have helped her develop skills that she hopes to bring to the Reflector. Mackenzie enjoys learning about different cultures and challenging herself with new experiences. In the future, she plans to attend Harvard University School of Law and become a lawyer, focusing on cases involving serious crimes and protecting victims’ rights. She hopes to make a difference by helping others and pursuing justice. As a Reflector staff member, Mackenzie plans to cover student life, entertainment, creative arts, and important social issues.

Meet – David Rodriguez Stephens. senior student for class of 2027 at Charlotte Amalie High School (CAHS.) He is currently a member of the chess club and while he’s not exactly great at it, he just enjoys playing it. His interests include entertainment, law, the Bible, and local news. Aside from playing chess, he doesn’t really have many hobbies. David is also quite indecisive about his career choice. For a long time, he wanted to be an immigration lawyer and that’s it, now he wants to be an actor, and is even considering wanting to be a member of the uniformed services, specifically Coast Guard. His indecisiveness has created a air of fear to graduate. David is also a Christian seeking a closer relationship with our lord and savior, God. However, like all followers, he isn’t perfect and struggles with lust, and a minor temper problem issue. David likes to read, but other than that, journalism is a new subject to him, so this will serve as his introduction. In short, expect a student who is sometimes quiet but is still somewhat social.

Meet – Mehkai Royer a motivated high school student, leader, and creative writer who is excited to join the Reflector staff. He enjoys writing, music, design, psychology, and exploring current events. As a member of the National Honor Society and JSA, Mehkai has strengthened his leadership, communication, public speaking, and teamwork skills. Through his participation in the Close-Up Foundation, he has also developed an interest in civic engagement and issues affecting the Virgin Islands. His 2026 internship with the Department of Planning and Natural Resources further developed his skills in organization, communication, and working with information. As a Reflector staff member, Mehkai plans to cover student life, school events, community issues, and student achievements. He hopes to highlight student voices while bringing a fresh, creative perspective to the publication.

Meet – Jose Severino. Jose started his educational journey at Jane E. Tuitt Elementary learning and thriving. From an early age he had a knack for music and started singing in 3rd grade leading to him joining the Jr. Calypso Competition’s Primary Division and winning the title of Monarch.

Later, he would earn the title runner-up in the Prince and Princess competition. Though, sadly, not winning the title, he was victorious in every category except one. Since then, Jose has been on the news 4 times. Currently at the Charlotte Amalie High School he is now a part of the Music Department and making his way day by day

As a Reflector staff member, he proposes to bring you the most authentic and main line news.

Meet – Leila Smith a senior at Charlotte Amalie High School, where she has maintained a strong academic record and earned High Honor Roll recognition throughout high school. She is a member of the National Honor Society and has served as Treasurer of Book Club and Secretary of French Club.

Leila has a strong interest in literature, creativity, and the arts. She enjoys reading, writing, planning, music, visual art, and storytelling. She is particularly interested in Greek mythology and the themes, symbolism, and characters within its stories. She also enjoys exploring how literature and art can represent identity, culture, relationships, and different communities. As she prepares for graduation in 2027, Leila hopes to continue developing her interests in writing, art, and storytelling while pursuing new creative and academic opportunities.

Additional Reflector Journalists

Alia Fish Cabrera
Ruth LaPlante

New Word Alert: **Philology** is the humanistic study of language, literature, and oral or written historical sources, focusing on the history and development of words.